

# **PROTECTION STRUCTURE FOR THERMAL CONDUCTING MEDIUM OF HEAT DISSIPATION DEVICE**

## **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

The present invention relates to a protection structure for a thermal  
5 conducting medium of a heat dissipation device, and more particular, to a  
protection structure installed on the heat dissipation device at the position on  
which the thermal conducting medium is coated.

The commonly seen heat dissipation device such as the aluminum extrusion  
type heat dissipation device is attached on a central processing unit (CPU) to aid in  
10 heat dissipation when the central processing unit is operating. Thereby, the central  
processing can operate under a tolerable working temperature. Before the heat  
dissipation device is attached on the central processing unit, an adequate amount  
of thermal conducting medium such as thermal conductive paste is coated on the  
heat dissipation device, such that a close contact between the heat dissipation  
15 device and the central processing unit can be ensured.

The thermal conducting medium is typically in the form of a paste that  
easily cause adherence of dust and contamination. In case the heat dissipation  
device is dropped or in contact with external object before being attached to the  
central processing unit, the thermal conducting effect will be greatly degraded by  
20 the dust or contamination. In addition, the amount of the thermal conducting  
medium applied to the heat dissipation device is also a crucial parameter that  
affects the heat dissipation performance. Therefore, if the thermal conducting  
medium is coated by the end user who does not own a proper judgment of the  
amount, the heat dissipation performance may be degraded by improper amount of  
25 thermal conducting medium. If the thermal conducting medium is coated before  
the final assembly, dust and contamination is easily attached to the heat dissipation  
device, which again, causes degradation of heat dissipation.

## BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a protection structure for a thermal conducting medium of a heat dissipation device. The protection structure covers the thermal conducting medium to prevent dust and contamination adhered thereto.

5       The present invention further provides a protection structure for a thermal conducting medium of a heat dissipation device which also covers the heat dissipation device to provide a complete package of the heat dissipation device.

      The protection structure provided by the present invention comprises a bottom surface to cover the thermal conducting medium, a side wall extending  
10    along and projecting from a periphery of the bottom surface to form a space for receiving the thermal conducting medium and a portion of the heat dissipation device, and a support structure protruding from the bottom surface to avoid a direct contact between the thermal conducting medium and the bottom surface. The support structure includes at least one pair of semi-spherical bumps, one pair  
15    of parallel ribs, or one pair of elongate ridges extending across the bottom surface. In the embodiment when the support structure includes a pair of elongate ridges extending across the bottom surface, the space formed by the sidewall is divided into a central space for receiving the thermal conducting medium and two spaces at two opposing sides of the central space. Preferably, the dimension of the central  
20    space is larger than the surface area of the thermal conducting medium.

      The protection structure may further comprises a plurality of friction fit structure protruding from the side wall, such that the heat dissipation device inserted in the space can be secured to the protection structure. The friction fit structure includes a plurality of ribs. Preferably, the top edge of the side wall  
25    further includes a flange. The heat dissipation device includes a substrate, a plurality of fins projecting from a first surface of the substrate, and the thermal conducting medium attached to a second surface of the substrate. The bottom surface is conformal to the substrate. The side wall has a height lower than the

height of the fins. In other embodiment, the side wall is level with the tips of the fins. The protection structure further comprises a lid to seal the heat dissipation device within the protection structure.

These and other objectives of the present invention will become obvious to those of ordinary skill in the art after reading the following detailed description of preferred embodiments.

It is to be understood that both the foregoing general description and the following detailed description are exemplary, and are intended to provide further explanation of the invention as claimed.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

These, as well as other features of the present invention, will become apparent upon reference to the drawings wherein:

Figure 1 shows a perspective view of a protection structure according to a first embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 2 shows an exploded view of the protection structure applied to a heat dissipation device;

Figure 3 shows a perspective view of the assembly of the protection structure and the heat dissipation device;

Figure 4 shows a cross sectional view of the assembly;

Figure 5 shows an exploded view of a protection structure applied to a heat dissipation device according to a second embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 6 shows a cross sectional view of the assembly as shown in Figure 5;

Figure 7 shows a cross sectional view of an assembly of a protection structure and a heat dissipation device according to a third embodiment of the present invention; and

Figure 8 shows a perspective view of a protection device according to a fourth embodiment of the present invention; and

Figure 9 shows a cross sectional view of the protection device as shown in Figure 8 applied to a heat dissipation device.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring now to the drawings wherein the showings are for purpose of  
5 illustrating preferred embodiments of the present invention only, and not for purposes of limiting the same.

A perspective view of a first embodiment of the protection structure is illustrated as Figure 1, an exploded view the protection structure applied to a heat dissipation device is shown in Figure 2, and Figure 3 illustrates the perspective  
10 view of the assembly of the protection structure and the heat dissipation device. Figure 4 shows the cross sectional view of the assembly. As shown, a heat dissipation device 2 is coated with a thermal conducting medium 20 such as a thermal conductive paste, and the protection structure 1 is used to cover and protect the thermal conducting medium 20 from being exposed to dust or  
15 contamination.

As shown in Figures 1 to 4, the protection structure 1 includes a bottom surface 10, a continuous side wall 11 extending substantially perpendicularly from the periphery of the bottom surface 10, and at least two contact portions 12 protruding inwardly from the bottom surface 10.

20 When the protection structure 1 is applied to the heat dissipation device 2, the bottom surface 10 is on top of the thermal conducting medium 20. As shown, the heat dissipation device 2 includes a heat sink formed by aluminum extrusion, for example. The heat sink includes a substrate 21 and a plurality of fins 22 formed on a top surface of the substrate 21. In this embodiment, the thermal  
25 conducting medium 20 is coated on the bottom surface of the substrate 21. Preferably, the contact portions 12 are spaced from each other to form a space larger than the surface area of the thermal conducting medium 20.

The continuous side wall 11 includes a plurality of side surfaces 110. Depending on the shape of the bottom surface 10, the arrangement of the side surfaces 110 may be altered. In the embodiment as shown in Figures 1 to 4, the bottom surface 10 has a rectangular shape, such that four side surfaces 110  
5 construct the continuous side wall 11 in the example. When the bottom surface 10 is circular, only one side surface 110 is required. The bottom surface 10 and the side wall 11 forms a space 13 allowing a portion of the substrate 21 to be inserted therein. Preferably, the bottom surface 10 is conformal to the substrate 21.

When the substrate 21 is partially inserted in the space 13 of the protection  
10 structure 1, the contact portions 12 prevent the bottom surface 10 from contacting with and pressurizing against the thermal conducting medium 20. In the example as shown in Figure 4, the contact portions 12 include four semi-spherical protrusions. By the contact portions 12, the substrate 21 is distant from the bottom surface 10 by a space 130 when the substrate 21 is inserted in the protection  
15 structure 1; and therefore, the thermal conducting medium 20 will not be damaged by the direct contact with the bottom surface 10.

In addition, the top edge of the continuous side wall 11 includes a flange 111 extend outwardly from the space 130. The flange 111 increases the structure strength and prevents the protection structure 1 from distortion. Further, it  
20 provides the convenience of inserting the substrate 21 into the space 130.

Figures 5 and 6 shows a modification of the first embodiment of the protection structure 10. In this embodiment, the side wall 11 extends longer to cover the full height of the heat dissipation device 2, and the contact portions 12 includes a pair of protruding ridges formed the bottom surface 10. In addition to  
25 the contact portions 12, a pair of ridges protrudes inwardly from the side surfaces 110 to serve as fitting elements 112. Thereby, the protection structure 10 can secure the heat dissipation device 1 therein by friction fit. As shown, the tips of the fins 22 are level with the top edge of the side wall 11, and the protection

structure 1 encloses the heat dissipation device 2 therein to be advantageous to package process.

Figure 7 shows a third embodiment of the protection structure 1, which is a modification of the second embodiment. As shown, a lid 14 is added to cover the open end of the protection structure 1, such that the heat dissipation device 2 is sealed in the protection structure 1. The protection structure 1 thus serves as a package of the heat dissipation device 2 as well.

Figure 8 illustrates the perspective view of a protection structure in a fourth embodiment of the present invention, and Figure 9 shows a cross sectional view of the assembly of the protection structure and a heat dissipation device. As shown, the heat dissipation device 2' includes a substrate 21' and a stack of fins 22' attached on the substrate 21'. The substrate 21' further includes a plurality of resilient fastening members 23 penetrating through the substrate 21'.

The protection structure 1 includes a bottom surface 10, a pair of side surfaces 110, and a pair of elongate ridges 114 protruding from the bottom surface 10. As shown, the elongate ridges 114 extending from one edge to the other of the bottom surface 10 and are parallel to the side surfaces 110. Preferably, the height of the side surfaces 110 is higher than that of the ridges 12, and the space 13 formed between the side surfaces 110 is slightly larger than that of the substrate 21'. Therefore, the heat dissipation device 2' can be partially disposed in the space 13. The lower portion of the space 13 is divided into three parts, including the central portion 130 between the ridges 12 and the side portions 131 between the ridges 12 and the side surfaces 110. When the heat dissipation device 2' is inserted in the space 13, the protruding ridges 12 serves as supporting arms of the substrate 21'. Each of the protruding ridges 12 includes a side wall 114 facing the side surface 110, a side wall 113 facing the side wall 113 of the other ridge 12, and a top wall 112. The top wall 112 is in direct contact with the substrate 21' when the heat dissipation device 1 is inserted in the space 13. Further, the distance

between the ridges 12, that is, the dimension of the space 130 is preferably larger than the dimension (width or length) of the thermal conducting medium 20, such that the thermal conducting medium 20, while being covered and protected by the protection structure 1, is not in contact with any structure or element. The spaces  
5 131 allow the fastening members 23 to insert therein.

This disclosure provides exemplary embodiments of the present invention. The scope of this disclosure is not limited by these exemplary embodiments. Numerous variations, whether explicitly provided for by the specification or implied by the specification, such as variations in shape, structure, dimension, type  
10 of material or manufacturing process may be implemented by one of skill in the art in view of this disclosure.